

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 134284
Inspection date 14 April 2008
Inspector Sonjia Nicholson

Type of inspection Childcare
Type of care Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder has been registered since 1992. She lives with her adult son in Thame, Oxfordshire close to the town centre where there are a range of facilities, including shops, parks and the library. Children have access to all areas of the home with the exception of the upstairs bedrooms. There is a secure rear garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time. She currently cares for five children, two of whom attend on a full time basis. The childminder takes children to and collects them from local schools.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment as the childminder follows a daily routine, such as hoovering to ensure the carpet is clean for them to play on. Children have protection from the spread of infection as the childminder follows a good nappy changing routine; she ensures she washes her hands afterwards, wipes the changing mat using an anti-bacterial spray and disposes of

nappies in the bin outside to prevent unpleasant odours. Toileting takes place upstairs where younger children are accompanied but there are also hand washing facilities situated in the kitchen. Children develop good personal hygiene habits and know when they need to wash their hands, for example, a child says 'I need to wash my hands before I do cooking. Where's my blue cloth?' He finds his blue towel hanging from the hooks in the kitchen where other coloured towels are available. Good hygiene is further promoted as children are reminded to wash their hands after sneezing and again when they lick their fingers during cooking.

The childminder keeps a record of medication given in the accident book along with parents' written consent either in letter form or using a consent form. Children benefit from the childminder's knowledge of first aid gained through attending a paediatric course; this means she can administer basic first aid to children when there is a minor accident. She records some details in the accident book but does not always detail the action taken which may have consequences for future treatment. In the event of a more serious accident the childminder obtains parents' written consent to seek further advice and/or treatment to ensure children receive prompt and appropriate care. There is an emergency policy in place which includes using another local childminder as a helper to ensure children are cared for safely.

Most food is supplied by parents except for snacks. Children enjoy a healthy snack of fresh fruit or vegetables, such as a carrot and have water or milk to drink. Children have regular drinks throughout the day, especially at mealtimes so they are not thirsty. The childminder has completed a food hygiene course and has knowledge of good hygiene practices, for example, she keeps work surfaces clean, stores food sent from home in the refrigerator so it does not spoil and is mindful to re-heat food safely in the microwave so there are no 'hot spots'. Children enjoy cooking activities with the childminder, for example, they make carrot and orange muffins which they eat as a treat after their lunch. A homemade poster is on display that helps children learn about healthy options.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within a clean, safe, welcoming environment. They have use of most rooms in the home where there is sufficient space for them to move and play freely and easy access to the fully enclosed garden. Children self-select from a good range of age-appropriate toys, for example, they build models using construction equipment and enjoy colouring-in with felt pens. During outdoor play they use a wide selection of equipment including ride-on toys to develop their physical skills.

Children play safely as all areas have been risk assessed to highlight potential hazards, for example, the garden is checked to ensure rain water has not accumulated in anything, the water feature has a secure metal grill in place to prevent access and socket covers mean that children do not come to harm. Children confidently describe what they would do in the event of a fire and smoke alarms are checked and details recorded each week along with dates of when the evacuation plan is practised. Younger children sleep safely following parent's wishes and their own routine, for example, a child benefits from the opportunity to sleep outside in their buggy with regular checks made by the childminder. Children learn about road safety as they cross the road and are well-supervised at all times during outings. There is a written policy regarding a child going missing and another if a parent fails to collect a child, however, this lacks some detail.

Children have protection from possible abuse and neglect as the childminder has a good understanding of the signs and types of abuse and the procedures to follow if she has concerns. Relevant documents including the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are available for parents along with the childminder's own written policy which needs slight amendment; this ensures they are fully aware of her role and responsibility. There are systems in place to record existing injuries to children and concerns about their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of differing ages appear settled and happy as they confidently explore their surroundings, for example, they use construction apparatus to make simple models on the carpet. The daily routine is very much led by what the children want to do with lots of opportunities for first hand experiences, such as, making cakes, colouring, practising writing their name and doing a dot to dot picture. Children are well supported by the childminder who chats freely to them throughout. Children respond well to her questions and comments which are designed to help them think and learn. For example, she encourages children to count how many cake cases they need and they count to 10 and beyond and she introduces new vocabulary, such as, 'baker'. Children's interests are well-known by the childminder who encourages their play by making a super hero outfit and a vehicle from a cardboard box; she also sources additional activities, such as, worksheets for them to use.

Children learn a variety of art techniques as they paint, make collage pictures and print with different objects. They develop mathematical skills, such as, sequencing as they re-tell the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears', match objects and measure their feet. Children have ample opportunities to go out and about where they climb on tree trunks and investigate insects living under the bark. They are involved in creating a sensory garden where they touch and smell herbs and plants. Children's achievements are recorded on observation sheets with photographs and examples of their work which are shared with parents so they know what progress they are making. Younger children enjoy lots of attention; on waking the childminder greets them warmly, gains eye contact and offers plenty of cuddles to help them feel secure.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about their local community as they go out into the town where they visit shops and other facilities, such as, the library. They socialise with other adults and children which helps them learn that everyone is different. Children gain an awareness of diversity through celebrating world and religious festivals, such as, Chinese New Year where they make stir fry, St. George's Day where they make shields and Hanukkah where they make wrapping paper and the Star of David. Resources that further promote their learning include play people of different races and with disabilities, books and a multicultural folder with information, worksheets and a calendar of festivals. Children's needs are well-known and they receive appropriate support, for example, the childminder does cooking with older children whilst younger children sleep. There are currently no children who attend with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but the childminder is very aware of the issues to consider if doing so. She monitors children's development closely in partnership with parents.

Children behave well and enjoy plenty of praise and encouragement. They begin to learn right from wrong with help from the childminder who uses age-appropriate strategies to support

their welfare and development. Children receive explanations if they misbehave and respond well to the simple house rules in place as detailed in the written behaviour policy. Children develop good manners, particularly at mealtimes, for example, the childminder expects them to ask before they leave the table.

Children benefit from the good relationships the childminder develops with their parents. She offers several visits prior to offering a placement to help both children and parents feel settled and happy. Children's care is discussed when parents collect them so they know what they have been doing that day. Written references from parents show they are extremely happy with the care provided by the childminder. They particularly highlight her creativity, kindness and organisation and feel their children are happy in the caring atmosphere she creates. Parents sign to acknowledge they have been given a copy of the childminder's written policies and procedures along with a copy of her Ofsted report. She maintains written business agreements and all required consent forms and provides details of how parents can raise a complaint, although some details are missing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for within a home where all adults have completed suitability checks. The childminder remains within her registered numbers at all times which means children receive high levels of care and attention, for example, she spends time with younger children whilst older children are at school or nursery. The children's daily routine depends on their age and who is present; the childminder organises trips out, for example, to a petting farm or park but gives children ample opportunities to express themselves and choose what they want to do, such as, dressing-up or cooking. They benefit from the childminder's attendance at relevant training courses to gain new skills and knowledge, such as 'Inclusive Music for All'. She implements new ideas into her daily practice, such as, using natural materials to make music; children tap a piece of wood with their finger tips to make the sound of rain and she extends the range of musical instruments available.

All areas of the home are well-organised so that children can move freely, select toys independently and play outside. The childminder keeps all regulatory records, most of which contain the necessary detail along with written policies which keep parents informed about the service she provides. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection two actions were raised; to ensure persons over the age of 16 undergo checks including a Criminal Records Bureau check and ensure that written parental permission is gained prior to administering medication.

Since then the childminder's son has completed a Criminal Record Bureau check which means children are protected as all adults in the home are now deemed as suitable. The childminder now gains parents' written consent before she administers medication; these forms and letters are kept in her accident/medication book for future reference.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure accident records contain information about the treatment given.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk